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THE EMPIRICAL DETERMINANTS OF CASSAVA FARMERS ACCESS TO MICROFINANCE SERVICES IN ABIA STATE NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study analyzed the determinants of cassava farmers' accessibility to microfinance services in Abia state, Nigeria. Specifically the study assessed the economic variables influencing cassava farmers' accessibility to microfinance, the qualitative perception of farmers' access and the empirical determinants of cassava farmers' accessibility to microfinance. Multistage random sampling technique was used in selecting respondents who were beneficiaries of Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) spread across the 3 agricultural zones in the state; from which primary data were collected using questionnaires. A total of 120 cassava farmers who are beneficiaries of Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) were used in the study. Method of data analysis used were means, frequencies, percentages, likert scale analysis and the logit multiple regression model. The result revealed that gender, age, education, household size, farm size and farming experience are the socio-economic variables influencing cassava farmers' access to MFIs. The varied level of accessibility enjoyed by cassava farmers were in terms of total amount of credit received, amount of credit used for cassava farming and distance to MFIs location. While the important significant determinants of accessibility are gender, age, education, farming experience, amount of loan repaid and ownership of house. It is therefore recommended that government policies can capitalize on the socio-economic variables in this study as veritable tools to encouraging accessibility to MFIs.

KEYWORDS: Accessibility; Microfinance Institutions (MFIs); Cassava farmers; services

INTRODUCTION

Accessibility is the right or opportunity to use, manage or control a particular resource (Nichols *et al.*, 1999). Resources may be economic (e.g land, and credit), political (e.g participation in local government and community decision making) and social (e.g education and training). In general women and men require different levels of access to resources based on their productive, reproductive and managerial capacity (Moser, 1993). When disadvantaged people have the ability to control their own environment by gaining greater access to material and intellectual resources Musokotwane *et al.*, (2001) have called this process empowerment. Many studies have already found that access to productive resources enhances knowledge on farm management, income generation, develops bargaining and decision making power, improves children's schooling and health, increases self-confidence and social networking and provides security at old age (IFPRI, 2000; Brian 2001; Pitt *et al.*, 2006).

In practice, the term "microfinance is usually used for institutions whose goals include both profitability and reducing the poverty of their clients (Desmond, 2007). The term Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) refer to the broad range of organization that provides such financial services to the poor. Since microfinance services are needed everywhere, MFIs are existing in many countries worldwide, even in the developed world. However, in contrast to the developing countries intense competition within the financial institution with different mission ensures that most people have access to some financial services (Daily-Harris, 2004). Empirical evidence shows that among the poor, those participating in microfinance programme, were able to improve their well-being both at the individual and household level much more than those who did not have access to financial services (CGAP, 2009).

As part of rural development drive and enhancement of flow of financial resources to Nigerian's rural areas where cassava is mostly grown, government has also encouraged the use of cassava

crop to produce a wide range of industrial products such as ethanol, glue glucose, syrup and bread. Furthermore, the Nigerian government recently promulgated a law, making it mandatory for bakers to use composite flour of 10.0% cassava and 90.0% wheat for bread production. This regulation which came into effect, January 2005, stipulated that the large flour mills that supply flour to bakers and confectionaries must pre-mix cassava flour with wheat flour (NRCRI, 2008). This has put more demand on efficient production of cassava, and as such this farmers need access to capital to enhance production. However, the latent capacity of the poor cassava farmers for entrepreneurship would be significantly enhanced through the provision of microfinance services to enable them engage in economic activities and be more self-reliant; increase employment opportunities, enhance household income and create wealth. Microfinance is about providing financial services to the poor who are traditionally not served by the conventional financial institutions. These features distinguish microfinance from other formal financial product. These are (i) the smallness of loans advanced and or savings collected (ii) the absence of asset – based collateral and (iii) simplicity of operations.

The policy objectives of microfinance institutions include the making of financial services accessible to a large segment of the potentially productive Nigeria population which otherwise would have little or no access to financial services, promote synergy and mainstream of the informal subsector into the national financial system, enhance service delivery by microfinance institutions to micro, small and medium entrepreneurs, contribute to rural transformation and promote linkages programmes between universal and development specialized institutions.

In Nigeria, the formal financial system provides services to about 35.0% of the economically active population while the remaining 65.0% are denied access to financial services. This 65.0% are often served by informal sector, through Non-Government Organization (NGO),

Microfinance Institutions (MFIs), money lenders, friends, relatives and credit union. These institutions are hardly regulated. The non-regulation of the activities of some of these institutions has serious implication for the Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN's) ability to exercise one aspect of its mandate of promoting monetary stability and sound financial system. A microfinance policy which recognizes the existing informal institutions and brings them within the supervisory purview of the CBN would not only enhance monetary stability, but will expand the financial infrastructures of the country to meet the financial requirement. In this regard the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) seeks to increase the share of microcredit as a percentage of the total credit to the economy in 2005 from 0.9 % to at least 20 .0% in 2020 and to increase microcredit as a share of the GDP from 0.2% in 2005 to at least 5.0% in 2020 (CBN, 2005).

Microfinance institutions have been given great emphasis in recent times because they are considered as essential actors in achieving social and economic development in both developed and developing world. The large scale organizations have found it much easier to access credit from commercial banks and other financial institutions. The micro and small scale enterprise have not been able to easily access credit from the commercial banks. There is therefore a compelling need to appraise cassava farmer's access to microfinance institutions to this effect some guiding questions are posed. These include:

What level of access do cassava farmers have to microfinance services?

What are the factors determining cassava farmers access to microfinance?

What necessary policies could ensure access to microfinance services?

Statement of Problem

Abia state farmers in Nigeria have been finding it difficult to access microfinance services and this is believed to have significant negative consequences for aggregate farm outcomes,

including technology adoption, agricultural productivity and efficiency, food security, nutrition, health and overall household welfare (Obike *et al.*, 2007). Akiram *et al.*, (2008) revealed problems with farmers' decision in accessing microfinance to include high interest rate, collateral requirement, time lag in the disbursement of loans, long distance to banks, difficult procedural and bureaucratic lending processing and high transaction cost. Adeyemi (2008) however, documents that despite decades of public provision of microcredit, policy reorientation and the entry of new players, the supply of microfinance in Nigeria is still inadequate in relation to demand. These suggest that there may be some inefficiency in microfinance operations in Nigeria due to some institutional inadequacies such as under capitalization, inefficient management and regulatory and supervisory loopholes. Okpara (2009) empirically identified four major critical factors inhibiting the accessibility of finance house in Nigeria as induces interferences from board members, political crises, under-capitalization and fraudulent practices. Microfinance bank is not an exception to the victim of these factors.

In spite of the role of the government and private sector in the micro financing activities, more grounds need to be covered. The existing Microfinance Institutions (MFI) serves less than a million out of the over 40 million people who need their services (CBN, 2005). Also, aggregate micro credit facilities account for 0.2 percent of the GDP and less than 1.0 percent of the total credit in the economy (CBN, 2005). One of the challenges for cassava farmers in Nigeria is to increase cassava output to 100 million metric tons by the end of 2011 (IITA, 2005). This was not realized because of some global financial challenges important. It is therefore important to improve the financing of the many small holder cassava producers through MFIs. Since microfinance has remained strategic in financing the rural poor (CBN, 2005), it has become necessary to ascertain the determinant of accessibility for the farmers especially cassava farmers

Justification

Microfinance can play important roles in reducing poverty amongst farmers by promoting productive use of farm inputs. This can be done by creating opportunities for rising agricultural productivity among small farmers. Microfinance is particularly relevant in increasing agricultural productivity of rural economy, especially agriculture (CGAP, 2009). Where there is economic growth, microfinance has the capacity of transmitting benefits of the growth more rapidly and more equitably through the informal sector (Hazarika and Awang, 2003). Accessing microfinance Institutions (MFIs) have been seen as one of the strategies that can bring faster development, (MFIs) therefore plays a big role in financing the micro and small enterprises include cassava enterprises for faster development they are also highly rated for employment creation and therefore important in Nigeria where unemployment and underemployment are estimated at between 25.0% and 35.0% respectively (Obike, 2013). Accessing microfinance credit influences the type of technology adopted by entrepreneurs and even the rate of technology adoption; this is also applicable to cassava production. Small scale enterprise in the agricultural sector especially cassava enterprise play a big role in providing food, income generation and employment creation. The application of technology is vital in enhancing growth and development of these enterprises. Credit is vital in the growth and development of any organization.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Study Area

This study was carried out in Abia state Nigeria. Abia is a state located in the south eastern zone of Nigeria. The state was chosen for the study because of its agrarian disposition and endowment in food crop production including various tropical crops especially cassava. It has been observed that major clients of microfinance institutions (MFIs) are mostly cassava farmers (ABSADP, 2005). The climate is essentially tropically humid with average annual rainfall of 229.20mm distributed evenly throughout its wet season, which covers a period of seven months (April to October). Diurnal temperature varies between 27⁰C and 31.9⁰C. Its annual rainfall is 1500 – 2600mm on a mean elevation of 122m above sea level (NRCRI, 2008). Abia state is located between longitudes 7⁰ 23'E and 8⁰ 02'E then latitudes 5⁰ 47'N and 6⁰ 12'N (NRCRI, 2003). It is bounded by Enugu state on the north, Rivers state on the south, Akwa Ibom and Cross River states on the east and Imo state on the west. Abia state was created on the 22nd August 1991 out of the then Imo state and has its capital at Umuahia. The state covers a total land area of 7677.20 square kilometers, with a total population of 2,833,999 persons made up of 1,434,193 or 55.0% males and 1,399,806 or 45.0% females (NPC, 2006). The state has 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs) clustered in three (3) agricultural zones namely Aba, Ohafia and Umuahia zones. The constituent LGAs of the zones are:

1. Ohafia Agricultural zone: Arochukwu, Bende, Isuikwuato, Ohafia and Umuneochi LGAs
2. Umuahia Agricultural zone: Ikwuano, Isiala Ngwa North, Isiala Ngwa South, Umuahia North, Umuahia South and Osisioma Ngwa LGAs
3. Aba Agricultural zone: Aba North, Aba South, Obingwa, Ugwuagbo, Ukwu East and Ukwu west LGAs.

Sampling Technique

The study adopted multi-stage random sampling method in a survey from which respondents were selected. Firstly random sampling method was used in selecting two (2) Local Government Areas (LGAs) from each of the three (3) agricultural zones these include: From Ohafia zone (Ohafia and Bende LGAs); from Umuahia zone (Umuahia North and Isiala Ngwa South LGAs) and from Aba zone (Ukwa East and Ugwunagbo LGAs). This gave a total of six (6) Local Government Areas. Secondly, a list of all microfinance institutions (MFIs) was obtained from each local government offices. Each list was subjected to a simple random sampling to select 6 MFIs from each of the three agricultural zones. This gave a sample of 18 MFIs involved in this study. These MFIs are Ohafia MFIs, Arochukwu MFI, Abiriba MFI, Uzuakoli MFI, Umuneochi MFI and Abia state University MFI in Ohafia agricultural zone. From Umuahia agricultural zone the chosen MFIs include: Umuchukwu MFI, Chibueze MFI, Decency MFI, Ovuma MFI and LAPO MFI. Aba agricultural zone have the following MFIs: Ukwa MFI, Ecosal MFI, Easy gate MFI, Ugwu MFI, Swift MFI and Umuike MFI.

Thirdly, the lists of cassava farmers who are contemporary beneficiaries of MFIs were obtained from the chosen MFIs. This formed a frame for a simple random selection of 40 cassava farmer beneficiaries from each agricultural zone. This eventually gave a sample size of 120 cassava farmer MFI beneficiaries.

Data Collection

Data for this study was obtained using a pre-tested structured questionnaire. The researcher with the help of some eight (8) extension staff of the ADP administered the questionnaire in the 3 agricultural zones of the state. These 8 enumerators were indigenes of the areas, trained and assisted in data collection. Cross sectional socio-economic data was collected from beneficiaries

of MFIs credit. Information collected included volume of loans received from microfinance in Naria, volume of deposits (savings), number of training and advisory services received access to information and technology services rendered.

Analytical Technique

Using a five point likert scale, means of credit beneficiaries' accessibilities were graded thus very highly = 5, highly = 4, moderately = 3, low = 2 and not accessible = 1. The variables for judgment included: volumes of deposits made (savings)N; Number of training and advisory services received; Access to information and technological services; Access to insurance policy; Total amount of micro credit received (N);Days taken to process microcredit; microloan processing cost (N); Interest rate charged on loan (%) and distance to microfinance institution (km) (Akiram *et al.*, 2008).

The likert scaling is a method of ascribing quantitative values to qualitative perception to make it subject able to statistical analysis. Farmers with accessibility score of 3.0 and above were 3.0 had no access or had hindered accessibility.

To determine the mean accessibility level = X

$$X = \frac{\sum X}{N} \text{ The mean score}$$

Xs of each item was computed by multiplying the frequency of each response pattern with its appropriate nominal value and dividing the sum with the number of respondents to the items.

This was summarized with the equation below:

$$Xs = \frac{\sum fn}{N}$$

Where:

\bar{X}_s = Mean score

Σ = Summation

F = Frequency

N = Number of respondents

N = Likert nominal value

Model Specification

The logit multiple regression model, following Pitt and Khanar (1998), Morduch *et al.*, (2005) and Li *et al.*, (2004) were used to ascertain the determinants of accessibility of MFIs. Here Accessibility = 1 otherwise assign zero. The logit regression model was expressed thus:

$$Y_{ij} = X_{ij}\beta_i + \mu_i \quad (\text{Pitt \& Khandker, 1998})$$

Where:

Y_{ij} = Accessibility to micro loan (accessible =1, otherwise = 0)

X_{ij} = Vector of household characteristics

β_i = Unknown parameters to be estimated

μ_i = Nonsystematic error term

Variables considered in this model included

X_1 = Gender of household (male =1, female =0);

X_2 = Age of household head (yrs);

X_3 = Years of schooling of household head;

X_4 = Household size;

X_5 = Farm size;

X_6 = Distance of the farmers house to MFI (km);

X_7 = Number of household family members participating in economic activities;

X_8 = Yearly income earned by household (farm +off farm income) (N);

X_9 = Ownership of house (owned house = 1 otherwise = 0);

X_{10} = Cassava farming experience of household (years)

X_{11} = Amount of loan repaid so far (N)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic Characteristics of Cassava Farm Households Accessing MFI in Abia State

Some selected socio-economic characteristics of cassava farmers who benefitted from MFIs microcredit are discussed. These include: gender, age education, household size, farm size and farming experience. Socio-economic characteristics have been suspected to have relationship with microcredit access.

Gender of Cassava Farm House head Benefitting from MFIs in Abia State, Nigeria

Table 1.0 shows that 73.33% and 26.67% of MFIs microcredit beneficiaries were males and females respectively. This finding is in consonance with Croppenstedt and Demeke (1996) which admitted that the gender of farm household head plays an important role in accessing credit support. Being a male in this case had a far reaching effect in facilitating access to microcredit facilities than being a female, and also small scale cassava farming is dominated by males contrary to findings of Mejeha and Obunadike (1998) that admitted that female farmers dominated cassava farming in Nigeria. This finding however may be due to the fact that males own most land used for agricultural activities in sub-Saharan Africa (Olayide and Heady, 1982).

Age of Cassava Farm Household Head Accessing MFIs in Abia State, Nigeria

The distribution of the respondents according to the ages of the head of Cassava farming households is shown in Table 1.0 the result shows that majority of 33.33% of MFIs microcredit cassava farmers' beneficiaries are within the age range of 40 – 49 years old. The mean age of the farmer group shows that MFI microcredit beneficiaries had a mean age of 46 years. This clearly shows that younger people were involved more in cassava farming than the elderly in the area of the study and also that younger cassava farmers benefitted more from MFIs services than the aged. It also affirms that younger farmers are potent beneficiaries of MFI loans. This result is consistent with Adeyemi (2008) who stated that younger farmers are more likely to benefit from

source of credit due to their energetic nature and abilities to adopt innovation. These younger respondents have the mental and physical capacity to be active and more productive than the aged farmers. Ogundale and Okoruea (2004) had shown that age is an important factor linked with productivity and that human capital input decreases with increase in the age of the farmer.

Educational Level of Heads of Cassava Farm Households in Abia State, Nigeria

Table 1.0 shows the educational levels of heads of cassava farm household benefitting from MFI. The result reveals that a good proportion of the household heads (53.33%) had primary school level of education, followed by 30.0% of those who attended secondary school; on the other hand 9.17% of MFIs microcredit beneficiaries had no formal education while 7.50% had tertiary education. The implication is that it may be deliberate policy of MFIs to issue microcredit to literate clientele. Education is perhaps supposed to impact positively on farmers' access to credit and other resources and even in their usage. Adereti (2005) confirms that education is an essential tool in accessing and using farm resources efficiently.

Household Size of Cassava Farmers Accessing MFIs Microcredit in Abia State, Nigeria

Table 1.0 shows the distribution of cassava farming households by size. The result shows that a good proportion (52.50%) of the MFIs microcredit beneficiaries had family size of 5 -8 members each. The mean household size estimates for MFI microcredit beneficiaries is 7.0. Thus family size of 5 – 8 members by implication can be termed moderate because of her ability not to divert the microcredit to consumption purposes (Obike, 2007). However, large family size of 9 and above are most likely to spend more of the microloan in financing consumption and other basic needs as such stands less chance to access microcredit (Akiram *et al.*, 2008).

Farm Size of Cassava Farmers Accessing MFIs in Abia State, Nigeria

The distribution of cassava farming households according to farm size in Table 1.0 reveals that many (52.5%) of cassava farmers who accessed MFIs had a farm size that ranged from 0.1 – 0.9 hectares. The mean farm size is estimated to be about 1.12ha. This implies that majority (52.5) of the cassava farmers were substantially small scale farmers as such microcredit is suited for farming activities in the area of study.

The Distribution of Respondents According to Farming Experience in Abia State, Nigeria

The result as presented in Table 1.0 reveals that majority (36.67) of cassava farmers had farming experience of 21 – 30 years. Whereas the mean for farming experience for cassava farmers accessing MFIs were estimated as 22 years. It is believed that higher years of farming experience is a necessary key to efficient cassava yield, thus MFIs would prefer their clients to have good years of farming experience. This is in agreement with Ohamola (1988) who noted that the years of farming will impact positively on the farmer's productivity and efficiency due to prudent resource allocation over time as the farmer must have acquired practical knowledge through trial and error.

CASSAVA FARMERS LEVEL OF ACCESSIBILITY TO MICROFINANCE SERVICES IN ABIA STATE NIGERIA

The perceived level of accessibility to microfinance services was measured on 10 parameters following Akiram *et al* ., (2008) which included; volume of deposit made (VD), number of training and advisory services received (ND), access to insurance (AI), total amount of credit received (TC), amount of credit used for cassava farming (UC), days taken to process microcredit (DM), micro loan processing cost (MC), interest rate charged on loan (IC), distance to microfinance institution (DS), information technology (IT). The overall perceived accessibility was measured by calculating the mean of farmers' response on the 10 parameters.

Table 2.0 shows the distribution of perceived level of accessibility to microfinance institutions on a likert scale measurement. The result showed that total amount of credit received (TC), amount of credit used for cassava farming (UC) and distance to microfinance institutions (DS) were found to be high i.e (>3.0 crossing the threshold mark of 3.0). The implication of this is that higher number of MFIs cassava farmers had access to microcredit; this may be because cassava farming is the main stay of the economy of the study area. More so the in distance to MFIs encouraged accessibility as such distance was not a barrier to MFIs accessibility, this is however in agreement with Mba (2001) who stated that distance to to sources of microcredit could positively or negatively affect accessibility. Meanwhile, other parameters like volume of deposit (VD), number of training received (NT), access to insurance (AI), days taken to process microcredit (DM), microloan processing cost (MC), interest rate charge (IC) and access to information and technological services (IT) were all found to be low i.e (< 3.0) because they did not cross the threshold mark of 3.0. The implication of this is that by perception, total amount of credit received, amount of credit used for cassava farming and the distance to microfinance institutions positively influences accessibility to cassava farmers to MFIs in the study area.

The positive parameters so perceived may influence their attitude to cassava farming positively, this is in agreement with Ogunleye (2000) and Lakwo (2010) which agree that access to microcredit can influence the small holders' attitude to agriculture and the strategies they follow to actualize their potential in farming activities.

Table 3.0 shows that in consonance with expectations gender (X_1), education(X_3), ownership of house(X_9), farming experience (X_{10}) and total amount of repaid loan (X_{11}) were found to have positive coefficients, indicating that these variables were directly associated with the probability for higher accessibility to microfinance institution. The implication of this result is that male

cassava farmers had high chances of accessing microfinance services than their female counterparts. More so education(X_3) increases the probability of having access to MFIs. This is because educational attainment is a contributory factor to demand for better quality service support to any farmer, by this farmer would have a better perception of service delivery of MFI and greater access to input distribution and utilization (Adereti, 2005). Ownership of house (X_9) increases the probability of having access of microfinance. This may be because owning a house (X_9) is a sure source of consolidated collateral (Chirinko, 1993). Farming experience (X_{10}) and total amount of repaid loan (X_{11}) increases the probability of accessing microfinance; the implication is that farming over a period of time may have made farmers to imbibe a culture of good and sustainable farming practice which in turn have given farmers advantage to accessing MFIs, this is in agreement with Kohansal *et al.*, (2008) who discovered a direct relationship with farming experience and accessibility of MFIs for farmers. The amount of loan repaid places the farmer at an advantage position for more access to microcredit (Pitt and Khandker, 1998). The negative coefficients of age of household heads means that old age tends to reduce the probability of accessing microfinance credit. It infers that younger farmers stand better chance than older farmers in accessing microfinance. This is however in agreement with Adeyemi (2008) who showed that older farmers stand less chance of accessing microfinance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study empirically examined the determinants of accessibility of cassava farmers to microfinance services in Abia state Nigeria. The socio-economic variables influencing cassava farmers with access to MFIs can be derived from those influencing cassava farmers generally in the study area, this include gender, age, education, household size, farm size and farm experience.

Cassava farmers in the area of study enjoyed varied level of access to MFIs in terms of the parameters measured based on the threshold of 3.0 on a 5 point likert scale. The varied level of accessibility enjoyed by cassava farmers were in terms of total amount of credit received, amount of credit used for cassava farming and the distance to microfinance institution. More so gender, age of household head, education, farming experience amount of loan repaid and ownership of house are important significant determinants of accessibility of MFIs for cassava farmers in the area of study

It is therefore highly recommended that the socio economic variables i.e gender, age, household size, level of education and farming experience be regarded as vital tools in planning government policies towards encouraging accessibility for cassava farmers to MFIs. This could be a veritable means to remain productive in cassava farming in Nigeria. Most especially the female gender should be encouraged by government policies to participate in accessing MFIs services as this could increase cassava production.

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Table 1.0 Socio-economic Characteristics of Cassava Farm Households Accessing MFIs in Abia State Nigeria

Socio-economic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Males	88	73.33
Females	32	26.67
Total	120	100
Age (years)		
20 – 29	8	6.67
30 – 39	26	21.67
40 – 49	40	33.33
50 – 59	31	25.83
60 – 69	12	10.00
70 – 79	3	2.50
Total	120	100
Mean: 46 years		
Educational level		
No formal Education	11	9.17
Primary Education	64	53.33
Secondary Education	36	30.00
Tertiary Education	9	7.50
Total	120	100
Household Size		
1- 4	28	23.33
5 – 8	63	52.50
9 – 12	24	20.00
13 and above	5	4.17
Total	120	100
Mean: 7.0		
Farm Size		
0.1 – 0.9	63	52.5
1.0 – 1.9	37	30.83
2.0 – 2.9	20	16.67
Total	120	100
Mean: 1.12		

Source: *Field Survey, 2012*

Table 2.0 Distribution of Microcredit Beneficiaries According to Perceived Accessibility Level to Microfinance Services Using Likert Scale Nominal Values

Variables	Very High Access(5)	High Access(4)	Moderate Access (3)	Low Access(2)	No Access(1)	Total	Mean	Std Deviation
VD	14(70)	24(96)	36(108)	28(56)	13(13)	343	2.98	1.19
NT	13(65)	19(76)	40(120)	33(66)	10(10)	337	2.93	1.12
AI	5(25)	7(28)	23(69)	46(92)	34(34)	248	2.16	1.06
TC	11(55)	28(112)	46(138)	25 (50)	5(5)	360	3.13	1.01
UC	46(230)	38(152)	22(66)	7(14)	2(2)	465	4.04	1.00
DM	6(30)	17(68)	37(111)	44(88)	11(11)	308	2.68	1.01
MC	11(55)	17(68)	42(126)	34(68)	11(11)	328	2.85	1.09
IC	3(15)	13(52)	30(90)	43(86)	26(26)	269	2.34	1.03
DS	33(165)	45(180)	23(69)	10(20)	4(4)	438	3.81	1.06
IT	3(15)	4(16)	28(84)	41(82)	39(39)	236	2.05	0.98

Source: *Field Survey, 2012*

Figures in parentheses: Likert nominal value

Figures not in parentheses: Number of respondents

(VD= Volume of Deposit, NT= Number of Training & Advisory Service, AI = Access to Insurance

TC = Total Amount of Credit received, UC = Amount of Credit used for Cassava, DM = Days Taken to Process microcredit, MC = Micro Loan Processing Cost, IC= Interest rate charged on loan,

DS = Distance to microfinance institution and Information Technology

Table 3.0 Logit Result of the Determinants of Accessibility of Cassava Farmers Accessing MFIs in Abia State Nigeria

Variable	Parameter	Coefficient	Standard Error	t – Value
Gender	X ₁	0.810	0.108	1.684*
Age of Household Head	X ₂	-0.003	0.002	-1.969*
Education (years)	X ₃	0.020	0.002	12.395***
Household Size	X ₄	-0.013	0.031	-0.424
Farm Size (ha)	X ₅	0.071	0.238	0.297
Distance to source of Credit	X ₆	1.4E-04	2.1E-05	-0.399
Number of household member participating in economic activity	X ₇	-0.012	0.056	-0.211
Annual Income	X ₈	2.3E-05	1.2E-07	-0.663
Ownership of House	X ₉	0.033	0.015	2.275**
Farming Experience	X ₁₀	0.007	0.001	5.841***
Amount of Loan repaid so far.	X ₁₁	2.5E-06	1.8E-06	2.952***
Intercept	Bo	-3.136	0.427	-7.343***
Chi- square	202.302***			

Source: *Field Survey, 2012.*

*, **, *** Significant at 10.0%, 5.0%, and 1.0% levels respectively